

Fort Sheridan Mess Hall and Central

Heating Plant (Building No. 47)

South side of Whistler Rd.

Fort Sheridan

Lake County

Illinois

HABS No. IL-1113-16

HABS

ILL,

49-FTSH,

1/16-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20243

FORT SHERIDAN, MESS HALL (Building No. 47)

*Fort Sheridan Historic District*HABS
ILL,
49-FTSH,
1/16-Location:

On Whistler Road across from the Company Kitchens
(Buildings No. 106, 107 and 108).
Fort Sheridan, Lake County, Illinois.

USGS Highland Park Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 16. 433120. 4673880.

Present Owner
and Occupant:

United States Army.

Present Use:

Post Exchange.

Significance:

This building was designed by Holabird and Roche to serve as the Mess Hall with a side wing designed to house the central heating plant. It has also served as a gymnasium, and in recent years, as the post exchange. It is one of the larger and more elaborate of the post's buildings and makes a notable addition to the comprehensiveness of the surviving 19th century building stock at Fort Sheridan.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1891.
2. Architect: Holabird and Roche, Chicago.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Army from date of construction to the present.
4. Contractor: William Goldie and Sons, Chicago.
5. Original plan and construction: A long, rectangular, single-story building with a one-and-one-half story wing attached to the center of the long side at a right angle forming a T. The main building has a hipped roof with the ridge running east-west, and the main entrances in the short ends. The ridge of the gable roof on the wing runs north-south. Both sections are constructed of buff-cream brick. A single-story structure without windows parallel to the wing and a large smokestack adjacent to it were constructed of brick. These structures housed the central heating plant and were connected at the basement level.

6. Alterations and additions: The original slate roof has been replaced with cement asbestos shingles, and a skylight has been removed from the roof of the wing. Doors and windows have been modified. Windows have been infilled with brick and glass brick and modified to serve as doors. New doors have been cut through at various places, particularly on the west side of the wing. The smoke stack adjacent to the wing on the east side has been cut back to its base and topped with a pyramidal roof.

The interior has been completely renovated. A new ceiling was installed considerably below the level of the old ceiling.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Original architectural drawings:

Center for Cartographic and Architectural Archives, Record Group 92, Blue Print File, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. Plans and elevations, n.d.

Holabird and Root, 300 West Adams St., Chicago, Illinois. 60606. First floor plan, n.d. Drawing is water damaged.

2. Old views:

Mackern, H. G. Fort Sheridan: At Attention and Rest, Chicago, H. G. Mackern, 1897, n.p.

Views of Fort Sheridan, Record Group 92, Audio Visual Archives, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. ca. 1897. Reference No. 92-F-61A-16, 92-F-61A-17.

3. Bibliography:

Papers Relating to Fort Sheridan. Office of the Quartermaster General Consolidated Correspondence Files, 1784-1915 and Office of the Quartermaster General Construction Division, Record Group 92, U.S. Army Continental Command, 6th Corps Area Records, Record Group 394 (contains specifications). National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

Real Property Records, Directorate of Facilities Engineering, Fort Sheridan, Illinois.

Prepared by Sally Kress Tompkins
Architectural Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
June 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Both the main building and the wing were designed by Holabird and Roche and share the Richardsonian Romanesque character of the other post buildings designed by that firm. The main building is the most distinguished with brick buttresses lining the long side and a broad, overhanging hipped roof. The wing is relatively plain, except for the raked parapet at the gable end and has had numerous modifications.
2. Condition of fabric: The roof is buckling, and there is leakage. The rest of the building appears to be in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The main building is a single-story rectangular block 72'-6" by 176', with two 8'-6" by 17'-6" entryways on the short ends. A one-and-one-half story wing measuring 63'-6" by 114' was added to the long side, forming a T-shaped building. The wing has a truncated tower on the east side with a pyramidal roof. A single story building, 86'-6" by 34'-6" was constructed parallel to the wing and is connected to it through the basement.
2. Foundations: Limestone rubble covered with cement.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Buff-cream brick laid in common bond with four rows of stretchers to one of headers. Eight brick buttress-like projections with slanted stone shoulders are spaced between every two windows on the long sides. On the south side the four central buttresses were removed when the wing was added. A limestone belt course connects the window sills on the main building. Above the flat window arches a dog-tooth course encircles the main building and runs across the gable end of the wing.
4. Structural system: Brick bearing wall. Wood trussed rafter roof.
5. Porches: There are two identical brick entryways on the short sides of the main building. The entryways are approached by concrete steps with hollow metal railings. The stairs to the entryway on the east end have pink-cream brick walls with a limestone top. The stairs to the entryway on the west end have rockfaced stone walls with a limestone top.

The roof of both entryways are hipped with overhanging eaves. The frames, trim and railings are painted a peach color.

There is a porch on the west side of the wing with brick piers inset with stone bands and topped by modified stone capitals. A wood stairway leads up to the entrance on the first floor. The porch has a hipped roof covered with cement asbestos shingles. Below the wood floor of the porch there is an entrance into the basement.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The two entryways contain double glass doors with metal frames and sidelights. Above the door is a stone lintel, and above that are two single sash windows with stone lintels that encircle the entryway.

There are two additional entrances on the east end of the main building. One at the bottom of a narrow down ramp provides access into the basement through double wood doors with single lights. The other provides access into the main level and had been modified from a window.

On the west side of the wing there are two entrances at the main level and five into the basement. One at the bottom of a ramp is the old coal door. Three entrances on the south side and one on the east do not appear to be original. The doors are mainly of wood with no glazing or a single light. Several are glass with metal frames.

- b. Windows: The windows in the main building are topped by flat gauged brick arches. They are four-over-four-light double hung sash with a two-light transom. Originally there were eighteen windows on the long sides and six on the short ends, three on each side of the entryways. Many of the windows have been infilled with a pink-cream brick or glass brick and single glass panels installed.

On the entryway the doors are flanked by narrow windows which are one-over-one-light double hung sash.

The windows on the wing also have flat, gauged brick arches. The openings are narrower than those on the main building and the windows are two-over-two-light double hung sash. One of the windows on the west side has been infilled with brick. The basement windows are covered with steel bars. The trim and bars are painted a peach color.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roof on the main building is hipped; that on the wing is gable with a raked parapet on the gable end. Both roofs are covered with cement asbestos shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The building has overhanging eaves with soffits painted a peach color. On the main building there are wood outriggers. A brick-on-edge course with alternating projecting and recessed brick forms a cornice on the main building.
- c. Cupolas: Two cupolas are in place on the ridge of the roof of the main building at the east and west ends. The cupolas have pyramidal roofs with overhanging eaves. They are covered by cement asbestos shingles.

C. Description of Interior:

The main floor has been extensively remodeled and modernized. In the basement the original concrete floors and brick walls remain. In the basement of the wing, steel plates and a line on the floor are remnants of a target practice area.

The heating plant equipment was housed in the windowless building which parallels the wing and was serviced through the basement of the wing. The plant supplied the nearby Barracks, Water Tower, and Company Kitchens with heat. Later the system was extended to include other buildings. It is no longer in use, and the equipment has been removed.

D. Site:

The building is located on the south side of Whistler Road with the Barracks and Water Tower complex (Building No. 48, 49, and 50) and the Company Kitchens (Buildings No. 106, 107, 108) to the north. Low lying evergreen shrubs are planted around the entryways. A large cement parking lot is located immediately to the south of the building.

Prepared by Sally Kress Tompkins
Architectural Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
June 1979

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) under the auspices of Interagency Archeological Services, Atlanta and funded by the U.S. Department of Army, Fort Sheridan, Illinois. It included a historical and architectural survey of the fort to provide the necessary data for implementation of the Fort Sheridan Historic District. Documentation was obtained on thirty-one buildings. The survey and documentation were accomplished by Sally Kress Tompkins, an architectural historian on the HABS staff, under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS; Kenneth Anderson, Principal Architect; Carolyn Pitts, Principal Historian, and Allen Chambers, architectural historian and editor. The photographs were taken by William Kumpf of Architectural Camera, Chicago.

ADDENDUM TO
FORT SHERIDAN, MESS HALL AND CENTRAL
HEATING PLANT (BUILDING NO. 47)
Fort Sheridan Historic District
South Side of Whistler Road
Fort Sheridan
Lake County
Illinois

HABS No. IL-1113-16

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013